

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6098

INFO AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

AMEMBASSY LIMA

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 15575

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CI, UK, ELAB, ILO, PINT

SUBJECT: TURN-BACK OF THE ITF MISSION TO CHILE

REF: SANTIAGO 7215 (NOTAL)

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: CHARLES BLYTH, GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT WORKERS FEDERATION (ITF), TOLD US THAT JACK JONES AND HAROLD LEWIS ARE EXPECTED TO RETURN TO LONDON ON FRIDAY, AT WHICH TIME THEY MAY DECIDE WHAT INITIAL RESPONSE MAY BE MADE TO THE ACTION OF THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT IN PREVENTING THE ITF MISSION FROM PURSUING ITS INVESTIGATION. JONES, OF COURSE, WILL ALSO BE RETURNING IN TIME TO PARTICIPATE DURING THE FINAL DAYS OF THE LABOR PARTY CONFERENCE, WHERE HE WILL HAVE AMPLE OPPORTUNITY TO CONDEMN THE GOC. END SUMMARY

2. BLYTH SAID HE HAD BEEN IN COMMUNICATION WITH THE ITF DELEGATION AND IT WAS AGREED TO HOLD OFF ANY ACTION OR STATEMENT BY THE ITF UNTIL JONES AND LEWIS RETURNED TO LONDON. BLYTH MADE IT CLEAR HE WAS OUTRAGED BY THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT'S DECISION, ADDING THAT "IT WILL DO
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THEM A LOT OF HARM." HE ALSO ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE

DELEGATION HAD DECIDED TO GO AHEAD WITH ITS VISIT
DESPITE THE INDICATION FROM THE GOC THAT IT WOULD NOT BE
ALLOWED TO PURSUE ITS MISSION.

3. THE ITF OFFICIAL SAID THAT THE GOC'S ARGUMENT THAT
THE ITF DELEGATION WOULD CONFLICT WITH THAT OF THE INTER-
NATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION WAS "PHONY." BLYTH SAID HE
UNDERSTOOD THAT THE ITF DELEGATION WOULD HAVE NORMALLY
DEPARTED CHILE PRIOR TO THE ARRIVAL OF THE ILO DELEGAT-
ION. BLYTH ADDED: "THE REAL REASON FOR THEIR ACTION IS
THAT WHILE THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT ITSELF WAS PICKING OUT
THE TRADE UNIONISTS WHO WOULD BE INTERVIEWED BY THE ILO,
WE WOULD HAVE GONE TO THE TRADE UNION REPRESENTATIVES
WHOM WE KNOW TO BE GENUINE."

4. BLYTH SAID THAT HE WOULD INSIST THAT THE ITF EXECUTIVE
WHICH MEETS IN JANUARY SHOULD TAKE ACTION ON THE MATTER,
INCLUDING A POSSIBLE BOYCOTT OF CHILEAN SHIPS. HE WILL
ALSO PURSUE WITH THE ILO THE QUESTION OF CHILEAN VIOLA-
TION OF THE ILO CONVENTION NO. 87 ON FREEDOM OF ASSOCIA-
TION.

5. COMMENT: WITH DUE ALLOWANCE FOR OUR DISTANCE FROM THE
SCENE, WE SHARE EMBASSY SANTIAGO'S VIEW THAT THE GOC
ACTION WAS "A RETROGRADE STEP." ALTHOUGH JONES MAY
DECIDE NOT TO EXPLOIT THE PROPAGANDA VALUE OF THE
CHILEAN REBUFF (REFTEL) THERE WILL BE AMPLE OPPORTUNITY
FOR HIM TO DO SO DURING THE FINAL PORTION OF THE LABOR
PARTY CONFERENCE, WHICH TAKES PLACE NOVEMBER 27 TO 30
INCLUSIVE.

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